



You won't have to lace up hiking boots, don a backpack, slap on bug repellent, or even buy a ticket – to navigate the Everglades Trail. Just get in your car or truck and hit the road! The Everglades

Trail is an audio auto tour that follows the Kissimmee-Okeechobee-Everglades ecosystem as it winds south down the Florida peninsula.

Stops along the way highlight sites of interest with informative narratives by Charles Osgood of CBS news, as well as interviews with Senator Bob Graham who has been a long-time supporter of the project. The rich folklore and historical accounts along the path where the "River of Grass" once flowed is available on CD with an accompanying map and brochure. An additional CD features the music of Jimmy Buffett.

An ecotourism video featuring the Everglades Trail aired on the Sunshine Network five times for one month, from June 3 through July 2. Produced by Three Star Productions and Wilderness Graphics of Tallahassee, the 30-minute show takes the viewer to various destinations along the Everglades Trail.

The District was instrumental in shooting footage for the video, and editing the final product. Executive Director Henry Dean is featured in an interview.

Numerous resource agencies dovetailed

their efforts so the Everglades Trail could become a reality. They include:

- National Park Service
- U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
- Florida Department of Environmental Protection
- Rookery Bay National Estuarine Reserve
- Florida State Parks Service
- The Nature Conservancy
- South Florida Water Management District

The Everglades Trail (www.evergladestail.org) will introduce millions of visitors to the "inside story" of a unique ecosystem. Brochures, donated by Wilderness Graphics, will be available free from VISIT Florida and also located at all the Everglades Trail sites. Rack cards will be available at Welcome Centers. The CDs will be on sale at bookstores throughout central and southern Florida.



*Question selected from District letters and emails received from the public.*

**Q** My kids have seen you in area parades and events, and on canal signs, and they think you are very cute! How do I get a picture of you for them?

**A** Thank you! I always enjoy seeing families at the events where I get to be a guest. They seem to like me here, too, because they have my face on a bunch of things that children might enjoy. I look a bit more muscular in my latest portraits, because I've been working out!

There's a sticker of me that some kids seem to like. It has conservation tips on the back, which you'll need to peel off to stick on

books or bicycles or whatever.

I'm also often featured in coloring sheets and educational materials (I'm much younger there).

To get copies of any of these materials, just call the District's Department of Public Information. Call toll free in Florida (800) 432-2045, or (561) 682-6883; or check out our web site (www.sfwmd.gov).

### Who is Freddie?

His full name is "Freddie the Friendly Alligator." He is the South Florida Water Management District's mascot.

You may have seen him on the signs that mark the region's canals and rivers.

Alligators dig deep holes in the swamp where they "hang out." When drought strikes, these "gator holes" provide water and food (fish, turtles, insects) for many other species such as wading birds. At the same time, any creature sharing the alligator's territory could become its lunch! That's why people should remember that alligators are wild animals which should be admired, but also avoided.

## CREDITS

*WaterMatters* is produced by the South Florida Water Management District's Department of Public Information to inform the public about District projects and programs. An internet version is also available in English and Spanish at [www.sfwmd.gov](http://www.sfwmd.gov)

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*The South Florida Water Management District is a regional, governmental agency that oversees the water resources in the southern half of the state. It is the oldest and largest of the state's five water management districts.*

*Our mission is to manage and protect water resources of the region by balancing and improving water quality, flood control, natural systems and water supply.*

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## NOW AVAILABLE!

### WaterWise Landscaping Guide

Our new plant guide includes landscaping tips and extensive listings of plants to help you create landscapes that save water and are environmentally friendly.

### Everglades Poster

Produced for Earth Day 2003, this poster celebrates the winged wildlife of the Everglades.

**For copies of these free materials, call (800) 432-2045 ext. 6883 or visit our web site (www.sfwmd.gov).**

## MAIL CALL!

Please help us keep our *WaterMatters* mailing list up-to-date.

- ☐ Add me to the list  
☐ Delete me from the list

- ☐ Make change/correction\*  
☐ Receiving duplicate copies\*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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We appreciate your suggestions and comments on this newsletter:

\_\_\_\_\_

Return this card to:

Department of Public Information  
South Florida Water Management District  
P.O. Box 24680  
West Palm Beach, FL 33416-4680

\* For changes/duplications – It would help if you cut out or copied the incorrect name/address on your newsletter and noted the changes directly on the printed label.



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